

JAMES ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL PARK

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

PHASE I
CONSTRUCTION REPORT

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PENNSYLVANIA COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

JAMES ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL PARK
CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

BENSALEM, PENNSYLVANIA

PREPARED BY:
BENSALEM TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PHASE I
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JUNE 1988

This project was financed in part through a Federal Coastal Zone Management grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resource with funds provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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BACKGROUND

James Armstrong Memorial Park is a site which is situated along the Neshaminy Creek. The site has been identified as an area of "significant recreational, historic, or cultural value" in the Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program Technical Report. As such, the park site is further identified as an area of existing open space where recreational needs can be served and public access to the water edge exists.

The Bensalem Township Board of Supervisors and the Bensalem Township Parks and Recreation Board has undertaken the task of developing Armstrong Memorial Park which has been partially funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, Coastal Zone Management Program.

James Armstrong Memorial Park is a site of 19.9 acres situated along the Neshaminy Creek in the easterly section of Bensalem Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The site also has frontage along Bensalem Boulevard at a point generally opposite the intersection with Gibson Road (formerly Bristol Road).

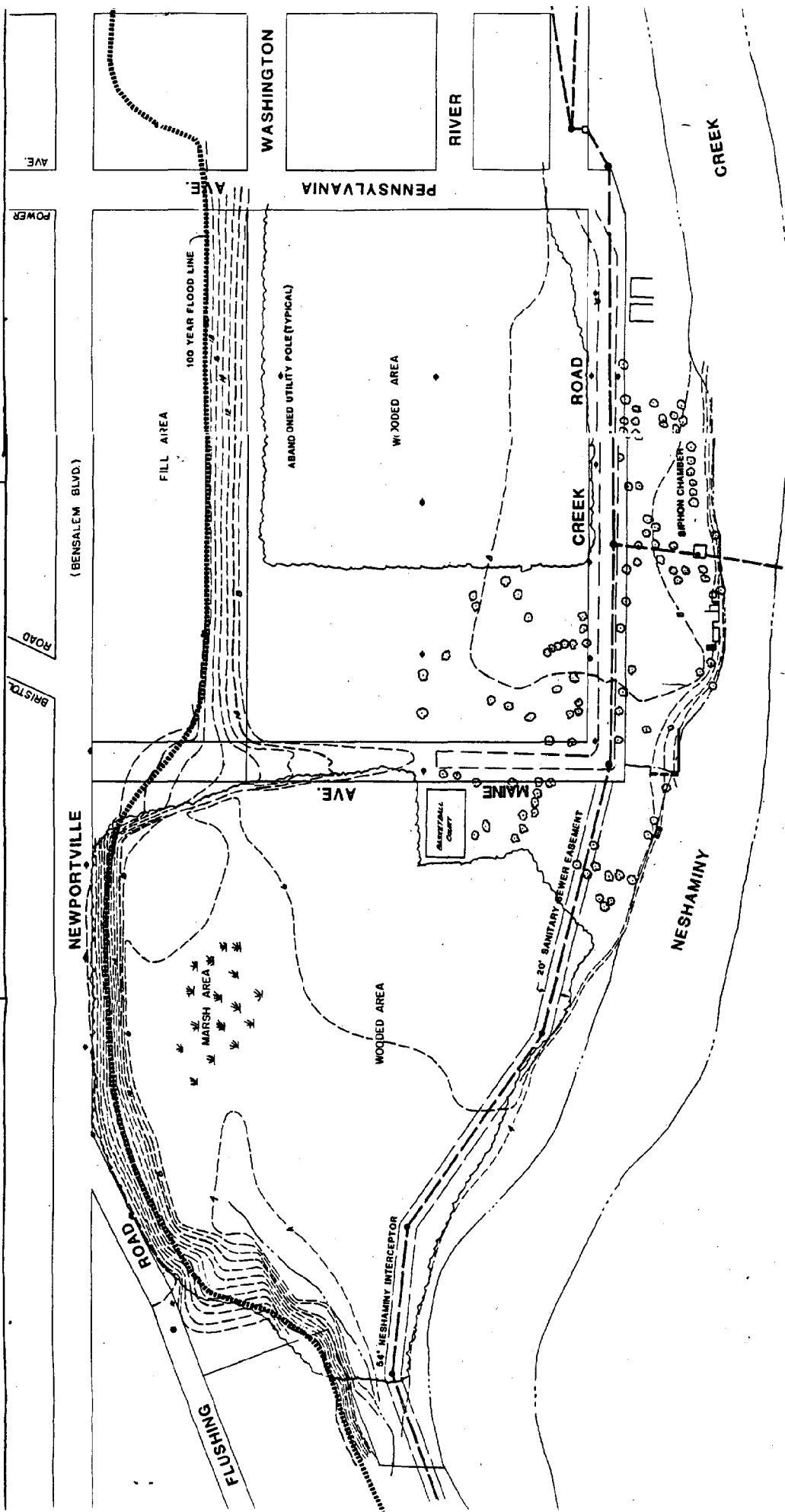
The Bensalem Township Parks and Recreation Board retained the firm of Carroll Engineering Corporation to prepare a planning study with three alternate programs for the development of James Armstrong Memorial Park. The study was prepared in close coordination with several local agencies, including the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Several meetings with the community were held to receive input from the public. In addition, a monumentation plan was prepared to identify the park properties and to target those properties for acquisition, which has been accomplished.

Because of budget limitations, the township was not able to develop this Park in its original Master Plan format. But chose instead to proceed with the Park development in a limited scope, with the monies currently available.



**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION
JAMES ARMSTRONG
MEMORIAL PARK
LOCATION MAP**

DATE: JULY 28, 1981 EXHIBIT No. 1



PHASE I
CONSTRUCTION

When beginning this project, it was necessary to decide which of the items included in the Master Plan Study could be accomplished with monies on hand. We decided to first take advantage of the Neshaminy Creek which runs parallel to the site for about 1600 feet. The Master Plan Study included the construction of a canoe launch that would allow non-powered boating, canoeing and shore line fishing, (not included in Phase I). Because most of the creek edge is 8' to 10' above the natural water line, it distinguishes this park and location from any other in Bensalem.

A concrete block wall - tied into a fishing pier runs along the edge of the creek for a short distance but was in need of repair. Plans called for its repair, to tighten and shore it up, but at this writing we are awaiting approval from the Army Corps of Engineers for the necessary permits. Plans now, are to proceed with this construction during Phase II of James Armstrong Memorial Park.

In addition to the Neshaminy Creek, approximately 70% of the park is wooded, with large and moderate size Ash, Oak and Tulip trees of the mature variety. This area covers the northern third and southerly one-half of the park. After this site was cleared and thinned of selected vegetation, it provided fine protection for picnicking and a hiking trail. Much thought needed to be given to this area because it has been designed as Wetlands by the Army Corps of Engineers. Approximately one-half of the three quarters of woodlands includes this designation. This Wetland area was determined through extensive collaboration between Carroll Engineering and the Army Corps of Engineers. Test samples were taken, etc., along with several on site meetings.

For this reason much of our original construction plans for the hiking trail had to be revised as to not disturb these areas. This also was considered curing the construction of the swale which runs just to the south-east of the Wetlands but in a southerly course from the park entrance. Rock check dams were installed at two locations of the swale, to aid in erosion control. Walking bridges, made from pressure treated materials were constructed over the swale in order to continue our hiking and nature trail through important and interesting areas. Future plans call for the marking and designation of important areas such as wildlife habitat and regional vegetation found through this area. In keeping with the natural setting of the wooded area, all debris and falling trees were removed with the exception of fallen trees necessary for some wildlife.

The area immediately to the north of the entrance road, but east of the designated Wetlands, was cleared for seeding and the installation of picnic tables, barbecue grills and park benches. Along its perimeter is located parking for approximately 30 vehicles. Auxiliary parking for 20 cars is also nearby. Further north, along the road we have cleared and thinned the understory of all debris but have been careful not to change its natural setting.

The section between the access road and the Neshaminy Creek has been prepared and seeded as lawn, for the enjoyment of visitors and convenience of creekside activities, such as fishing, boating, etc.

SIGN LOCATED
AT ENTRANCE



VIEW FROM
BENSALEM BOULEVARD
LOOKING EAST



VIEW FROM
INSIDE PARK
LOOKING UP TOWARD
ENTRANCE



VIEW FROM
THE CREEKS
EDGE



OPEN SPACE
ALONG THE
NESHAMINY CREEK



VIEW ALONG
ACCESS DRIVE
FROM THE SOUTH



AUXILIARY
PARKING LOT



PICNIC AREA
FROM SOUTH



OPEN SPACE
VIEW FROM
NATURE TRAIL
ENTRANCE LOCATED
AT SOUTHERN AREA



VIEW FROM
EAST OF
PICNIC AREA
AND PARKING
LOT



ENTRANCE OF
NATURE TRAIL



EROSION
CONTROL



VIEW FROM
CREEK OF SWAIL
WITHIN WOODED
AREA



VIEW OF WOODED
AREA FROM TRAIL



PHASE II
SUMMARY

With continued support from Federal, State and local governments, priority will be given to the completion of work along the creek side. The canoe launch should be completed by years end. In addition, with completion of paving, access to and from the park area will be made safer and more convenient.

Also important for future development is the continued support of the community and users of the Park. Anticipated expenditures for Phase II should be approximately \$43,000. The initial phase of Armstrong Park is projected at \$75,000, including engineering fees. With assistance from Coastal Zone Management (\$42,000), Bensalem Township and its residents will be able to enjoy one of our most important natural resources, the Neshaminy Creek.

